

**PHIL5512 Moral and Political Philosophy:
The Good and the Right**

Course Outline

(A detailed course outline will be distributed to the enrolled students at the start of the semester.
Please note that this tentative course outline is subject to changes.)

Mode of Teaching: Face-to-face Teaching

Term: 2024-25 Term 2

Time : Wednesday 18:30-21:30

Location : YIA LT9

Course description (with tentative topics) for 2024-25 Term 2:

This course investigates key questions concerning the extent of personal liberty versus state authority. Topics include: Under what conditions should the state interfere with individual liberty? Should the state ban or discourage unethical or worthless ways of life? Should the state coerce people for their own good? What is so valuable about personal autonomy? Should laws and policies be neutral toward different conceptions of the good life? In addition: What is morally right and what is morally wrong? Could there be any objective understanding of what the good life is? Through critical evaluation of arguments supporting and opposing liberal positions, students will assess the efficacy and influence of contemporary liberal thought.

General course overview (as shown on CUSIS)

Discussion of selected issues in contemporary ethical and political philosophy. The content of the course will vary from year to year and may include such topics as deontological, consequentialist, and contractarian ethical theories; virtue ethics; ethical egoism; the nature of value and the good; ethical realism, relativism, and intuitionism; the role of rights in ethical and political theory; theories of justice; the debate between liberalism and communitarianism; Marxism; feminist critiques of contemporary moral and political theory; and the relation of Confucianism to recent ethical and political thought.

Schedule: To be provided in the first week of the semester

Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)

1. Understand the selected issues in contemporary ethical and political philosophy.
2. Acquire knowledge of the Political Philosophical themes of the course.
3. Develop the ability to research independently on the issues taught.

Assessment scheme

Participation (20%)	Attendance and active participation are required. Students who attend all lectures will receive a minimum of 10 marks.
Class Presentation (20%)	Students responsible for the presentation must email an outline to all classmates two days before their scheduled presentation.
Commenting on Presentations (20%)	Participate by commenting on at least two different presentations, at least twice.
Final Paper (40%)	4000-6000 words for English papers or 7000-10000 words for Chinese papers. A list of suggested topics will be provided in due course.

Remarks on Assessment Scheme (if any): NA

Grade Descriptor

Please refer to: http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf

Details of course website

Relevant announcements and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

Recommended learning resources (*Tentative*)

- Arneson, R. (2005). Joel Feinberg and the justification of hard paternalism. *Legal Theory*, 11(3), 259-284.
- Attas, D. (2000). Freedom and self-ownership. *Social Theory and Practice*, 26(1), 1-23.
- Chan, J. (2000). Legitimacy, unanimity, and perfectionism. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 29(1), 5-42.
- Conly, S. (2013). *Against autonomy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Devlin, P. (1965). Morals and the criminal law. In *The enforcement of morals*. Oxford University Press.
- Dworkin, G. (1988). *The theory and practice of autonomy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dworkin, G. (1989). The concept of autonomy. In J. Christman (Ed.), *The inner citadel* (Chapter 3). Oxford University Press.
- Dworkin, R. (1977). *Taking rights seriously*. Duckworth.
- Dworkin, R. (2011). *Justice for hedgehogs*. Harvard University Press.
- Enoch, D. (2014). Why I am an objectivist about ethics (And why you are, too). In R. Shafer-Landau (Ed.), *The ethical life* (3rd ed., pp. 208-221). Oxford University Press.
- Feinberg, J. (1986). *Harm to self: The moral limits of the criminal law*. Oxford University Press.
- Frankfurt, H. (1971). Freedom of the will and the concept of a person. *Journal of Philosophy*, 68(1), 5-20.
- Gaus, G. (2003). Liberal neutrality: A compelling and radical principle. In S. Wall & G. Klosko (Eds.), *Perfectionism and neutrality: Essays in liberal theory* (pp. 137-165). Rowman & Littlefield.
- Gaus, G. (2011). *The order of public reason: A theory of freedom and morality in a diverse and bounded world*. Cambridge University Press.
- George, R. (1993). Making men moral. In *Making men moral* (Ch. 2). Clarendon Press.
- Hart, H.L.A. (1963). *Law, liberty, and morality*. Oxford University Press.
- Hurka, T. (2011). *The best things in life*. Oxford University Press.
- Kramer, M. (2017). *Liberalism with excellence*. Oxford University Press.
- Kraut, R. (2007). *What is good and why: The ethics of well-being*. Harvard University Press.
- Mang, F., & Chan, J. (2022). Perfectionism. In W.R. Thomson (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Oxford University Press.
- McElwee, B. (2010). The appeal of self-ownership. *Social Theory and Practice*, 36(2), 213-232.

- Mill, J.S. On liberty. (Original work published in 1859)
- Pojman, L., & Fieser, J. (2012). Ethics: Discovering right and wrong. Wadsworth.
- Quong, J. (2011). Liberalism without perfection. Oxford University Press.
- Rawls, J. (1971). A theory of justice. Harvard University Press.
- Rawls, J. (2005). Political liberalism. Columbia University Press.
- Raz, J. (1986). The morality of freedom. Clarendon Press.
- Sher, G. (1997). Beyond neutrality: Perfectionism and politics. Cambridge University Press.
- Tahzib, C. (2022). A perfectionist theory of justice. Oxford University Press.
- Velleman, J.D. (1999). A right of self-termination? Ethics, 109(3), 606-628.
- Waldron, J. (1993). Liberal rights. Cambridge University Press.
- Wall, S. (1998). Liberalism, perfectionism, and restraint. Cambridge University Press.
- Wall, S., & Klosko, G. eds. (2003). Perfectionism and neutrality: Essays in liberal theory. Rowman & Littlefield.

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Teacher	
Name:	Prof. MANG Fan-lun (Franz)
Office location:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

TA	
Name:	
Office location:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

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